The Rural Youth Entrepreneur Project

by
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The purpose of the Rural Youth Entrepreneur Project is to investigate and describe the role of agricultural education as an agent of community development in rural areas. A sample of FFA American Farmer Degree recipients provided responses to questions regarding their experiences in entrepreneurship and relationships between that experience and current career and area of residence. The study showed large numbers of migration out of rural areas as a result of lack of employment opportunities and the desire among entrepreneurs for a more developed curriculum that focuses specifically on business and financial aspects of entrepreneurship as well as encourages a stronger connection with and understanding of the service needs of the rural community. An emphasis on this curriculum within agricultural education would provide better opportunities to discourage migration of educated youth out of rural communities and encourage community development within rural areas.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION iii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS iv

LIST OF TABLES v

LIST OF FIGURES vi

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION 1

  Background and Setting 3

  Problem Statement 4

  Pilot Phase Purpose 4

  Project Purpose and Objectives 5

    Limitations 6

    Assumptions 6

  Definition of Terms 6

CHAPTER II REVIEW OF LITERATURE 9

  Flat World Changes 9

  Agricultural Education as Career Preparation 10

  Other Forces in Entrepreneurial Based Career Preparation 12

  The Purpose of Entrepreneurial Education 12

  Defining “Rurality” 13

  Rural Economic Drivers 14

  Contributions of Entrepreneurism to Economic Development 20
DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my beautiful son, Augustine Craig. Being your mother has taken me down so many wonderful new paths, and I am thankful for the blessing of your life! May you always know that with God, anything is possible and that true value lies in the dignity of each life.
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# LIST OF TABLES

Table

1. Techniques Used to Control Threats to Internal Validity 34

2. Frequency of Demographics of Area Raised 45

3. Frequency of Category for Entrepreneurial SAE Participation 51

4. Likert Response Categories 53

5. Impact on Decision to Complete an Entrepreneurial SAE 56

6. Categorical Frequency of Entrepreneurship Currently in Practice by Responders 71

7. Categorical Educational Components and Current Success 75

8. Categorical Frequency of Community Characteristics Contributing to Entrepreneurial Success 78

9. Frequency of Category for Curriculum Needing More Emphasis or Improvement 81

10. Open Ended Suggestions for Entrepreneurial Topics in Curriculum 82
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Gender breakdown of survey responders</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Marital status breakdown of survey responders</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Marital status breakdown of survey responders</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Educational background of survey responders</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Demographics of area raised</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Migration rate for survey responders</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>Migration versus movement data based on area raised vs. area live</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>Supervised Agricultural Experience data</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>Composite extent of impact scores for decisions to participate</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in entrepreneurial SAEs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>Percentage breakdown of extent of impact choices for decision to participate</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in entrepreneurial SAEs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>Percentage breakdown on extent of impact for decisions not to participate</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in entrepreneurial SAEs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>Raw composite extent of impact scores for decisions not to participate in entrepreneurial SAEs</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>Choice to consider entrepreneurial SAE under different circumstances</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>Career Development Event categorical participation rate</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.15</td>
<td>Extent of agreement regarding CDE participation and entrepreneurship</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>Extent of agreement for advisor influence and entrepreneurship</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>Frequency of earning percentage from entrepreneurship</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>Frequency of earning percentage from entrepreneurship: specific intervals</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>Extent of agreement for educational components and current success</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>Extent of agreement score for educational components and current success</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Despite the highly developed nature of many areas in the United States, there seems to be a certain appeal to the rural lifestyle. In many ways, people idealize the prospect of living in areas that allow them to remain in a state of connection with their surroundings. Observations of research on rural development have noted that these connections among rural residents involve relationships with nature, other people, and history. This nature of intertwined interests offers a sense of security and stability not often found in urbanized areas (Galston, 1995).

Despite the lifestyle appeal afforded, the nature of rural communities is such that the vast majority of the economic activities sustaining them are concentrated solely within their bounds. Excluding a limited number of fluctuating industries, rural citizens, including local entrepreneurs, are the primary contributors of capital input, in both human and physical forms. These characteristics place limitations on the ability of communities to increase economic activity while seeking to keep vital financial resources within individual communities. Additionally, these communities find that new generations of citizens are less likely to remain at home as a result of fewer opportunities for lucrative employment. The combined pressure from the loss of local talent and drain on resources can make the future of many rural communities questionable. The solution for keeping the youth of these communities at home and allowing them to enjoy the rural lifestyle often involves providing local opportunities to establish employment that allows for a comfortable lifestyle; frequently, this means that youth must find
ways to start up their own businesses. This entrepreneurial spirit is primarily an instinctive way of viewing the world; it can, however, be learned and built upon by interested individuals (Knight, Thompson, & Warnick, 2007). Therefore, a key to bridging the gap between the degeneration of rural economies and environments and the progression of future economic development in rural communities may rest in part through the instillation of ideas and skills of entrepreneurship within the youth of the community. The intent of training youth in entrepreneurship is to increase the likelihood that they will choose to remain at home in the future because they have the skills to establish themselves successfully within the community and can capitalize on the appeal of the rural lifestyle.

Schools with agricultural education programs are one of the primary vehicles for teaching these entrepreneurial skills to students who are enrolled within them. Agricultural education uses the SAE (Supervised Agricultural Experience) program to train youth in the practices of time and financial management, record keeping, and decision making as they develop their own entrepreneurial project. As the students continue their involvement in the program throughout high school, they are encouraged to expand and improve their projects, effectively growing their business and entrepreneurial skills in kind.

The National FFA (Future Farmers of America) Organization is an intracurricular youth organization that all agricultural education students are encouraged to participate in. The FFA has an awards program, which recognizes excellence in students’ entrepreneurial enterprises on local, state, and national levels. Receiving an award at the national level is a challenge. Students must have completed three or more years of secondary agricultural education and demonstrated the strength of their SAE program by having earned and invested at least $7,500 through their entrepreneurial efforts and agricultural employment. Such foundations of real-
world experience provide confidence and can help youth recognize the potential within to be successful business leaders in communities across the country.

**Background and Setting**

Since its inception, the emphasis of agriculture education programs in rural areas has followed the traditional economic focus on production agriculture; however, with the changes in the agricultural industry and the landscape of our nation, it is becoming clear that holding on to traditional paradigms is less and less beneficial to the students and communities.

Nationally, agriculture continues to have an increased need for research and development, marketing, distribution, and communications. Furthermore, agriculture and related businesses continue to be a major force in national employment and productivity. The question facing agricultural education is: how do we loosen the grip of this limiting perspective of the industry and successfully communicate its true diversity and range of fulfilling career opportunities?

Conroy suggested that the answer lies in understanding that youth’s career aspirations and educational plans are tied to their knowledge of a career area and its related opportunities. (Conroy, 2000) As an educational delivery system, agricultural education strives toward this goal of career awareness and preparation in the global agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resource systems. (National FFA, 2008) The integral role of the National FFA Organization reinforces this goal through opportunities for leadership and personal growth leading to career success. For these reasons, the tools needed to begin to uncover the ways that agricultural education has made positive contributions to the development of rural areas are already at hand. The Rural Youth Entrepreneur project aims to explore and describe the impacts that agricultural
education programs in rural areas have had on young people’s career awareness and development as entrepreneurs. In doing so, the project will allow agricultural education to respond to the changing needs and perceptions of youth in rural areas throughout the country.

**Problem Statement**

There have been no efforts to investigate the role of agricultural education in the economic development of rural areas. Additionally, though agricultural education places an emphasis on experiential learning to create strong connections between classroom learning and real world application in students’ homes and workplaces, little is known about the real influence that these learning experiences have had on their chosen occupations and residential preferences.

**Pilot Phase Purpose**

The intent of the pilot phase of the study was to establish a valid and reliable instrument for the purpose of surveying the recipients of the American FFA Degree from each participating state during the 1990s at a future point in time.

**Project Purpose and Objectives**

The overall purpose of the Rural Youth Entrepreneur Project is to describe the role of agricultural education as an agent of community development in rural areas.

**Objectives**

The specific objectives of the Rural Youth Entrepreneur project are to:

1. Determine whether there is a relationship between youth earning the American FFA degree through entrepreneurial projects and the likelihood of them remaining in or returning to rural
communities to participate in entrepreneurial activities as a source of income following high school graduation.

2. Describe the development of these entrepreneurs through their involvement in agricultural education and the National FFA Organization.

3. Describe the entrepreneurial topics and activities incorporated into the curriculum utilized by the agricultural educators of these individuals.

4. Describe the current activities of those American FFA degree recipients who have returned to their rural communities as entrepreneurs.

5. Develop a curricular framework on which teaching materials for high school agriculture teachers, university faculty, and community educators will be designed for use in increasing and improving entrepreneurial activity in rural communities.

Limitations

1. Results are reported for the survey instrument in Arizona, therefore these results can only be generalized to American Degree recipients from this state.

2. Because people’s ability to recall life experiences lessens over time, the target population for this project has been narrowed to individuals who received their degrees during the decade of the 1990s.

3. For similar reasons, the target population for the pilot study was restricted to degree recipients from Arizona during the ten years prior to and following the 1990s.
Assumptions

The following assumptions were made in regard to this project:

1. Most agricultural education programs in the states of Oregon, Arizona, and Utah utilize the total program structure in which students gain entrepreneurial experience through a combination of 1) classroom instruction, 2) SAE, and 3) FFA activities.

2. The American Degree is a strong indicator of successful SAE enterprises among Agricultural Education students and FFA members.

3. Employment opportunities are a major influence on rural youths’ decisions to remain in or leave the rural environment.

4. “Rurality” is best described on the basis of population in a given area.

Definition of Terms

This project involves investigating and describing several facets of an existing educational program, the students who have completed the program, and their entrepreneurial efforts. The investigators have targeted a specific population that can be defined from many perspectives. For this reason, the following list of terms below is defined to clarify the author’s intent in communicating the findings and results of the Rural Youth Entrepreneurship project.

**Rural:** “All areas outside urban areas with 10,000 or [fewer] people; this places the upper limit of rural population at ten thousand. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, this includes 70.6 million people, or 25% of the U.S. population and 98% of U.S. land area” (Cromartie, 2007).

**Rural Development:** Activities that contribute to the sustained success and growth of the
economy in rural areas through the establishment of entrepreneurial ventures.

**Entrepreneur:** A person who creates and grows an enterprise (Dabson, 2003)

**Agricultural Education:** An agriculture based instructional system that includes three intra-curricular components: 1) classroom instruction, 2) experiential learning through supervised experiences (SAEs), and 3) leadership activities through the National FFA Organization.

**SAE (Supervised Agricultural Experience) Program:** a planned practical agricultural activity which supports skill and competency development, career success and application of specific agricultural and academic skills a student has learned through classroom instruction in agricultural education; SAE was formerly known as SOE, or supervised occupational experience.

**Entrepreneurship:** The act of organizing, managing and assuming the risk of a business or enterprise.

**Placement:** An SAE program where students work for wages or experience.

**Youth Entrepreneurship:** The involvement of a high school aged person in the field of entrepreneurship.

**National FFA Organization:** The national youth organization founded in 1928 for young people interested in the field of agriculture and agriculturally related careers; formerly known as the National Future Farmers of America Organization.

**American FFA Degree:** The highest award that the National FFA Organization can bestow upon its members; this final step in the FFA degree system encourages students to grow and achieve personally toward establishing themselves in an agricultural career.
**American Farmer Degree:** The original name of the highest degree bestowed upon an FFA member by the National FFA Organization.

**Reliability:** Refers to an instrument’s ability to produce similar results when administered again. In this study it refers to the assessment’s ability to report similar results when administered to several different American Degree recipients from across the state of Arizona (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006).

**Validity:** Refers to an instrument’s ability to measure what it is intended to measure. For this study it refers to the ability of the survey instrument to obtain information about the experiences in agricultural education and the National FFA Organization held by individuals from rural areas throughout Arizona (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006).
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of Literature

The following areas were determined to be of interest in their ability to explain the motivation and need for the Rural Youth Entrepreneur Project. Below is a summary of the information found in a further review of these subjects.

Flat World Changes

There was a time when rural meant remoteness and an often diminished ability to influence or be influenced by forces outside of the surrounding area. However, today in the rural United States and around the world, holding basic knowledge of economic forces at the local or even national level is no longer sufficient to maintain a complete and competitive picture of the marketplace that all entities must operate within. In 2005, author Thomas Friedman brought this fact to the attention of millions of people, when his book, The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century unfolded a reality that many people in the United States and around the world participate in daily, although they are not always acutely aware of their participation. Friedman put forth the idea that globalization is more than just a catchy word to be thrown around business, academic, and social circles in this way:

“‘Globalization is the word we came up with to describe the changing relationships between governments and big businesses…but what is going on today is a much broader, much more profound phenomenon.’ It is not simply about how governments, business
(sic), and people communicate, not just about how organizations interact, but is about the emergence of completely new social, political, and business models” (2005).

The emergence of these new models is attributed to a “flattening,” or shifting of interactions to a more direct, or “horizontal” approach; Friedman points to intertwined advances in the scope and availability of information and technology as the driving forces behind the flattening process—with countries being the first to gain understanding that there was a bigger picture beyond their own borders, progressing to multinational businesses, and today reaching the level of individuals beginning to understand the importance of defining their place in the world from a global perspective. All of these changes in perspective and structure suggest impacts on the very nature of rural areas and their residents.

Agricultural Education as Career Preparation

From its early days as ‘vocational agriculture’ to more recent descriptors including ‘agriscience’ and ‘Ag Ed’, career preparation has been an important component of agricultural education, especially in rural areas. However, the effectiveness of this preparation and the relevance to actual career opportunities available has come under scrutiny. As early as 1977, a report to the National Institute of Education, noted that there was a need for rural education to provide both entrepreneurial skills and technical assistance to isolated communities, to ensure that these communities might better maintain a viable economic base while retaining their social identities (Sher, 1977). Authors Sher and Rosenfeld maintained that the standard for measuring quality vocational education programs should not just be based on the educational process but also on the extent to which the program is committed to teaching youth the skills that are relevant and marketable in the current or future job market. With the passage of time, these
assertions are even more relevant. Increases in technology, the spread of urbanization, and a globally focused economy are all challenges that make the task of preparing students with skill sets relevant to their local economies more difficult than ever.

In her research examining the career perceptions and job decisions of youth, Conroy addresses the need to counter the negative effects that mass media have had on the image of the agricultural industry as a viable career choice:

Today’s young adults are strongly influenced by expected economic rewards associated with career alternatives. Society’s macro issues, changing lifestyles, and occupational images projected by the mass media have a major impact on career choices of adolescents. Therefore, food and agriculture information and recruitment issues must deal with these mega forces. Other research noted in Conroy’s work concludes that the overwhelmingly negative opinion youth held toward pursuing an agricultural career can be attributed to the perception of farming and ranching as the only available options; In essence, she states that the overall problem is with students who are not presented with an accurate view of the industry (1998).

However, the structure of agricultural education today is better equipped than ever to address these challenges. The three components of classroom instruction, hands on learning through supervised experiences, and leadership training provided by FFA activities are an excellent vehicle for teaching the content and life skills that students need in adulthood, regardless of their ideal career areas. National FFA programs and opportunities play a critical role in helping students to develop an accurate paradigm of the changing agricultural horizon. Competitions and award programs challenge students to excel in the latest in biotechnology, veterinary science, horticulture, communications, and business management. With these
opportunities properly explained and implemented, agricultural education is in the position to continue to change negative perceptions of the industry and prepare rural communities for successful futures in the changing world economy.

*Other Forces in Entrepreneurial Based Career Preparation*

Agriculture, however, is not the only vehicle for the delivery of career related skills; there are other forms of career preparation that target the acquisition of entrepreneurial competencies as the foundation for future employment opportunities. A publication by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) entitled “*Entrepreneurship Education: Learning by Doing,*” highlights several programs throughout the region that utilize entrepreneurial training as a tool for student career success; these programs range from computer technology services to those that train students to become “CEOs” of their own enterprises through identifying creative ventures catering to the needs and wants of the community around them. This publication also places the spotlight on additional programs and resources related to teaching youth entrepreneurship, including: The Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), which operates in a secondary educational setting and Delta Epsilon Chi (DECA), which operates at the post-secondary level. EDTECH, the Ewing Marion Kauffmann Foundation, and the Consortium for Entrepreneurship Education (CEE) are also programs designed to encourage youth and young adult entrepreneurship (Balwin, 2004).

*The Purpose of Entrepreneurial Education*

The article “*Keys to Successful Programs,*” by Dr. Cathy Ashmore (2004) Executive Director for the CEE, points to research from the National Federation of Independent Business, which found that two out of three of American entrepreneurs grew up in a family with someone
who was an entrepreneur: a father, mother, grandparent, or other relative. However, for youth who do not have such familial connections, Ashmore and the CEE suggest that schools and hands-on programs can also provide a “breeding ground” for future entrepreneurs (Ashmore, 2004, pg. 5). Their belief is that entrepreneur education from elementary education to high school is an opportunity for students of all ages to explore potential careers that build on their individual interests and abilities. Ashmore explains that as the essential skills being taught progress from basic math to marketing, management, and financial processes, youth learn about the keys to successful businesses and that this knowledge and ability can help youth find entry-level jobs in their communities-increasing their success because they have an understanding of the issues faced by their employers. In respect to finding industry vehicles for building the entrepreneurial spirit among America’s youth, Ashmore noted that every industry provides opportunities for entrepreneurship-mentioning medicine, hospitality, music, computers and technology, transportation, and art as examples.

**Defining “Rurality”**

Asking the question, “what qualifies as rural?” is an obvious starting point for a study such as RYEP. The Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI) notes that “this question seems more important to non-rural organizations working in rural [areas] than to folks from rural places. The question is most likely rooted in the desire to better define whether policies and programs need to be customized or changed to meet “rural” circumstances” (Rural Policy Research Institute, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship n.d.). As a research effort by universities that are connected to rural areas by joint agricultural backgrounds, yet separated from the rural communities in mission and scope, the Rural Youth Entrepreneur project does indeed seek to determine a set of best practices in agricultural education for rural areas. Furthermore, it is true
that the diversity and variability among the areas that most consider as rural throughout the United States make it very difficult to choose a single description. Again, RUPRI has addressed this difficulty clearly by noting that “we all have our ideas, images, and biases when we hear the word ‘rural’ or think about rural places; however, as America has become more demographically and culturally urban, our clarity of understanding of ‘what is rural’ has diminished” (Rural Policy Research Institute, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship n.d.). For these reasons, it is critical to make a distinction of rurality as it applies to the work of the Rural Youth Entrepreneur project.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) maintains a list of several definitions for ‘rural’ based on several different criteria from agencies including: the USDA Economic Research Service (ERS), the U.S. Census Bureau, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and several others. The definition chosen for RYEP is based on the premise that rurality is best described on the basis of population in a given area.

*Rural Economic Drivers*

According to RUPRI, traditional rural economic activity has centered upon the sectors of natural resource industries, processing and manufacturing industries, corridor industries, government-related activities, and local support activities. RUPRI notes that, “with some exceptions, notably in high amenity rural places and in rural areas adjacent to cities, these strategies are not leading to the creation of sustainable rural economies. While the explanation for this failure differs, the result is the same for the rural communities left behind” (Rural Policy Research Institute, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship n.d.). The following paragraphs are RUPRI descriptions that outline each of these traditional sectors’ strategies and provide the strengths and weaknesses of each as it relates to the present day rural economy:
NATURAL RESOURCE INDUSTRIES. Predominant among rural America’s economic sectors are the natural resource industries of farming, ranching, timbering, mining, energy production, and fisheries. When active and well resourced, these industries can create wealth and active economies. However, as resources are depleted, recession and decline undermine vitality.

PROCESSING INDUSTRIES. Closely associated with the natural resources and open spaces found in rural America are processing and manufacturing industries that need raw materials, unskilled and semi-skilled workforces, and space to operate. While these industries remain important to rural America, many are in decline because of depleted resources and the transition of manufacturing jobs to countries with lower wage scales and fewer environmental regulations.

CORRIDOR INDUSTRIES. Most Americans now live in either suburbs (roughly one in two Americans live in the suburbs) or central cities (where about one in four Americans live). These places require connection to each other and the rest of the world. Because rural America exists between metropolitan areas, a central economic activity is serving as a transportation and communication corridor. Railroads, highways, pipelines, and fiber optics all cross rural America and are creating secondary economic activity.

GOVERNMENT-RELATED INDUSTRIES. The federal government (and to a lesser extent state government) is a major economic player in rural America. The public sector owns and operates vast tracks of public lands, such as national forests, military installations, prisons, and waste sites. In addition to government land ownership and activities, the NGO sector (nongovernmental organizations) has an increasing presence in rural America. For example, the Nature Conservancy now works in more than 500 rural landscapes throughout America.
SUPPORT ACTIVITIES. Finally, there are assorted economic activities that support communities and their needs. Local government, retail, personal services, health care, and education all fall into this category. Emerging research suggests that, although deteriorating rural communities suffer from a lack of incoming wealth, it is their inability to capture and recycle the incoming wealth that has the greater negative effect (Rural Policy Research Institute, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship n.d.).

In the case of ‘traditional’ sectors, the task ahead for rural areas is to determine whether these sectors are contributing wealth to the community or adding to an overall inability to capture and recycle wealth as it comes in.

Another facet to the structure of rural economies is the consideration of future changes in direction. RUPRI has cited several new and potential trends for rural economies today and into the future. These trends are based in the areas of sociology, technology, and business.

The social phenomena that have emerged on the horizon of American life and show potential to impact rural American include: suburbanization, seasonal residents, and elder industries. Suburbanization is a function of Americans’ love of the amenities offered by urban areas but dislike of perceived drawbacks including pollution, overcrowding, and hectic pace of life. RUPRI notes that many Americans have chosen to compromise, moving further out into the nearby rural areas to live and raise families. An often unforeseen consequence of this residential shift, however, has been that as the urbanized areas expand over time, and the areas once considered rural are engulfed and eventually changed into the urban setting that their residents hoped to escape.
A similar sociological force on rural America is the presence of seasonal residents. Seasonal residents are those individuals who divide their time between a primary residence and one or more additional residences throughout the year. Motivation for this movement between residences may be related to recreation and/or retirement; whatever the impetus for this residential movement, RUPRI’s research indicates that since the beginning of the 19th century, an increasing number of primary residences are located in metropolitan areas. It is interesting to note however, that within the last twenty five years the tendency of these same individuals who chose urbanized settings for their primary homes is to seek out rural areas for their seasonal residences. The location of these additional homes for retirement and recreation has been observed in a range of rural settings from “more remote” areas such as the Great Plains as well as in locales with “high amenities, [a term best described as ease of access to goods and services].”

The emergence of a significant population of elderly individuals in America also bears consideration in relationship to rural areas; elders are defined as “persons 65 years of age and older” (Rural Policy Research Institute, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship n.d.). With the aging of the baby boom generation, hailed as the largest group in American history, the need to provide goods and services to this population is exerting economic pressure to create new industries. Many of the elderly range from middle class to moderately affluent; furthermore, their spending power, resources, and political leverage all come into play in the communities that elect to become involved in elder-centric industries.

Business sector changes are yet another consideration in relationship to the future of rural economies. RUPRI credits the Center for the New West as the first to use the term “Lone Eagles” to describe a number of urban Americans who have chosen to leave cities and instead use rural areas as their home base in setting up Internet businesses. With the exact role that such
technology savvy entrepreneurs will play still unclear, RUPRI suggests that rural communities be aware of their potential: citing lone eagles as a possible new generation of business and community leaders, philanthropists, and mentors for entrepreneurs and youth in rural areas.

Entrepreneurial growth companies, or EGCs, are another business related impact for rural communities. RUPRI states that “the U.S. Department of Labor delineates 394 economic regions in the United States. According to research by the National Commission on Entrepreneurship, every one of these regions has EGCs. These EGCs, or “gazelles,” are the companies that are achieving rapid and sustained growth and are the engines of regional economic performance” (Rural Policy Research Institute, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship n.d.). On its website entitled “Working in America,” RUPRI also suggests that the support of EGCs and other growth-focused entrepreneurial enterprises that have the potential to achieve EGC status could provide rural areas with a major economic boost (Rural Policy Research Institute, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship n.d.).

The emergence of lone eagles and corridor industries are among the signs that technology and its proliferation at the global level has not left rural America without opportunities to take economic advantage of its presence. Telecommunications has been a key to a majority of these economic opportunities. Lone eagles use broadband in remote areas for the Internet access that allows them to be successful. In addition, even the smallest rural businesses can use telecommunication advances including telephone and video conferencing, online advertising, ordering, and shipping, and a host of other technology to reach markets never dreamed of in the past. Customers are no longer strictly local residents, but may span national and international markets. Increased competition means that even rural businesses must raise their stakes in the
Alongside the trends affecting the rural economy are a handful of sectors that may prove to be viable substitutes for declining traditional economic drivers. The majority of these sectors are focused on utilization of natural resources in new and innovative ways through the application of science and technology, while others emphasize taking advantage of market globalization to create a niche based on the appeal of unique local products.

In the area of natural resources, opportunities exist for building markets based on recreational tourism, hydrocarbon feedstock, alternative energy production, carbon sequestration and other emerging natural resource industries. The target of hydrocarbon feedstock is the production and processing of both traditional agricultural commodities and non-agricultural commodities as inputs for the manufacture of diverse products ranging from artificial sweeteners and soy inks to paper. A key aspect of this sector is its dependence on cutting edge scientific knowledge through the use of specific genetic engineering to tailor itself to the needs of the food, fiber, chemical, and pharmaceutical industries.

“New generation natural resource industries,” though not proven as definitive members of the rural economy, are showing up in many creative forms. Individual ventures capitalize on the demand for quality products as opposed to commodities. A prime example of this area is the organic industry; enterprises that produce free range poultry, furniture products from reclaimed timber, organic wheat, grass fed beef, and seafood take advantage of the natural resources available in rural areas to meet consumer demands.
Alternative energy and carbon sequestration also land in the realm of the push to wisely utilize natural resources at the national and global level. Alternative energy sources including solar and wind power are seeing increases in interest as energy crises threaten, yet have not been in place long enough to determine whether their implementation will provide a stable long-term source of economic activity in rural places. Carbon sequestration follows the related concerns for the health of the global environment. Proposals designating rural areas to remain or be restored to their “natural states,” including forested areas and tall grass prairies cite the value of reducing carbon levels in the atmosphere to combat ‘global warming.’ Many such arguments for changing the use of rural landscapes in favor of have been made, yet the ability of said arguments to institute a new sector of economic activity remains to be seen (Rural Policy Research Institute, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship n.d.).

The modification of existing corporate ventures and smaller scale rural artisans open doors take advantage of globalized markets to open doors for potential new economic drivers in rural America. RUPRI notes that while the majority of front line business operations are still centered in large cities, globalization has allowed for the outsourcing of labor to international and rural areas. Background business operations including accounting, storage, and processing services can contribute valuable economic activity to rural areas. In a similar fashion, the tradition of the rural arts and crafts industry may carve out profitable niches in a world that has become increasingly geared toward standardization, but still appreciates the uniqueness of locally made products and the artistic drive of area artisans (Rural Policy Research Institute, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship n.d.). Though the exact applications and long term viability for these new and emerging drivers remain unconfirmed, their presence offers valuable
perspective on the resources and tools that may be most useful to keeping rural communities on
the map.

**Contributions of Entrepreneurism to Economic Development**

As explained by RUPRI, entrepreneurism is a possible bridge between struggling
traditional economic structures and future sustainability. A few studies have uncovered some of
the benefits of entrepreneurism in economies. The first study, conducted by the National
Commission on Entrepreneurship, entitled “Embracing Innovation: Entrepreneurship and
American Economic Growth,” states the following:

- Small entrepreneurs are responsible for 67% of inventions and 95% of radical
  innovations in the U.S. since World War II. Such diverse products as frozen foods, air
  conditioning, the cotton picker and the helicopter resulted from the drive and innovation
  of small entrepreneurs.

- A small group of high growth entrepreneurs, only 5% to 15% of all firms, created about
  two thirds of net new jobs in the late 1990s. In many parts of the country, these small
  entrepreneurial firms are contributing new jobs at the same time as larger firms are
  cutting back employment.

- Through their innovation and creativity, entrepreneurs are transforming existing business
  sectors (think Cabela’s for hunting and fishing equipment) and creating new sectors
  (think biotech) that are competitive throughout the world.

Another work, the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor project, is a yearly comparative
international study conducted by the Ewing Kauffman Foundation to explore the role of
entrepreneurship in selected countries. In 2000, the study presented these findings:
• The correlation between the level of entrepreneurial activity and economic growth among the countries studied is greater than 70 percent.

• All nations with high levels of entrepreneurial activity have above average rates of economic growth. Only a few nations that have above average rates of growth have low levels of entrepreneurial activity.

Another multi-year study, the Panel Study of Entrepreneurial Dynamics, turned the focus from international entrepreneurism to what is taking place within the United States. The panel study found that entrepreneurship in the United States has a broad base, reaching across all racial and ethnic groups. In relationship to the location of entrepreneurs, the study indicated that even though entrepreneurs are located throughout the country, urban areas boast higher rates of entrepreneurship than rural communities. The study also reported that at any given time, about 10 million adults are trying to create a new business (Rural Policy Research Institute, Center for Rural Entrepreneurship, n.d.).

*Rural Youth Leaving Home*

While economic changes are a threat to rural economies, another blow to the stability of such areas is the outmigration of younger citizens. In 2005, a study entitled Attachments to Family and Community and the Young Adult Transition of Rural Youth explored the reasons for rural youth’s departure from rural life. Authors Kirpatrick-Johnson, Elder, and Stern reported that the ties to family and community as well as rural students’ educational and occupational aspirations were the primary migration related factors. The study also posed the suggestion that the Farm Crisis of the 1980s may be a contributor to the earliest observations of outmigration tendencies among rural adolescents.
In support of this hypothesis, Kirkpatrick-Johnson mention The Iowa Youth and Family Project, which was launched in response to the Farm Crisis. Findings of the IYFP implied a predisposition to migration among rural youth due to the availability of local job opportunities. This predisposition was in spite of any existing attachments to family, community, or career aspirations and was noticeably different between genders. Specifically, IYFP stated that girls showed a preference for leaving their rural areas to seek more variety in career choices as early as the 8th grade.

In another study related to the impact of the 1980s crisis, findings revealed that the wages of rural youth during this time dropped more dramatically than the wages of youth in urban areas and that this trend was broad in scope-hitting every major economic sector outside of New England. Besides the issue of lacking economic opportunities, author Elder found that educational difficulties also stimulated youth to migrate; in fact, the brightest young people were far more likely to leave their communities to seek higher education and better employment opportunities, when compared to those who did not do as well in school and saw little chance for college; these individuals preferred to live near their families and original communities as adults.

This loss of young people from rural areas to educational pursuits is not limited solely to the United States. Two researchers in the early 1990s undertook projects to consider impacts of youth ‘out-migrating’ from the Scottish Shetland Islands. Research showed that the anticipation of outmigration was higher among those youth without strong social [family] ties to the area and those who aspired to higher education or professional careers. The researchers in Scotland were also surprised to note that even an increase in expected local job opportunities coming from the North Sea oil industry did not seem to have an ability to persuade youth to remain in rural areas.
In this case, authors Seyfrit and Hamilton went so far as to state that ‘the Shetland and Orkney Islands, like many rural areas, are drained by out-migration of bright and ambitious youth.’

Seyfrit and Hamilton conducted similar investigations among young Canadian Inuit living in Alaska. In this project, the authors sought to determine motivators for migration among youth in the Bristol Bay and North West Arctic region. In their findings, the authors reference other sociological work among the Inuit that explained some cultural changes related to youths’ aspirations. This additional work pointed to Euro-Canadian culture as a source of opportunities that did not exist in traditional Inuit culture. Inuit youth also cited the quality of local education, scarcity of local jobs, and limited social life in rural areas as motivation for outmigration. Similar to the findings of the Iowa Youth and Family Project, Seyfrit and Hamilton found that young Inuit women had a disdain for the way of ‘bush’ life for women and recognized the need to move away from the traditionally male held occupations in the local mining and oil industries to larger towns or cities. While the exit of intelligent, self-motivated young people from rural areas is on the rise around the globe, the true extent and impacts on rural life remains to be seen.

Recent Migration Trends

In Exploring Contemporary Migration, author Boyle shed further light into the issue of migration by noting that there are several observable patterns in the migration picture: urbanization, suburbanization, and counter urbanization. Urbanization is a phenomenon that is traced to early agricultural advances during B.C. times to the emergence of the Industrial Revolution. Both advances in society changed the way people produced food and other commodities in ways that allowed for the centralization of populations into cities. It cannot however, be assumed that these were the only reasons for residential movements or that these
moves were permanent. According to Boyle, suburbanization is a trend that may begin to occur as the population of large urban areas increases; those centers may cope with gains in population via decentralization-another term for this pattern. It is interesting to consider that the original perceptions of areas on the perimeters of cities were negative. Most thought that these areas were less desirable to live in and more suitable for the underbelly of society. Boyle’s work noted a decline in this way of thinking; the contributing factor to this particular decline is the implementation and improvement of transportation modes-especially mass transit, as over time more middle class workers chose to live further from city centers and commute into centers for work.

A movement not yet proven, though related to the previous two is known as counter urbanization. Counter urbanization was observed in the United States during the 1960s and 70s as metropolitan counties saw a decline in their populations while non-metropolitan areas experienced population increases; researchers studying this trend in the latter 1970’s called it a ‘rural renaissance.’ An intriguing aspect of the so called rural renaissance was that it occurred at a more rapid pace in remote rural areas as opposed to rural areas in close proximity to metropolitan counties; this aspect led to the conclusion that counter urbanization could not be explained away as a consequence of metropolitan expansion. Though they provide insight into the topic of migration, Boyle was careful to state that these observed residential movements are not fully understood and are open to debate.

Additionally, “Rural high school graduates are less likely to graduate from college than their urban counterparts, mostly because they are less likely to attend college. Half of rural college attendees leave home and do not return by age 25. Those that do return are drawn largely by home ties and intervening life choices rather than local job opportunities” (Gibbs, 1995)
With identifiable primary migration factors including the availability of local job opportunities, rural students’ educational and occupational aspirations, and desirable wage availability, it is important to examine what factors are driving rural economies in current times. In areas where desirable job opportunities may not exist within the framework of the current economy of an area, agricultural education programs may serve as a bridge to agricultural entrepreneurship for rural youth who have either little or no background in production or entrepreneurship.

Programs such as the FFA program and especially the American Degree facet of that program serve to provide tools to assist youth in creating or growing businesses that allow them to self-sustain and contribute economically to an area. Because of the encouraged diversification of agriculture, plus the growth of niche markets in agricultural products, opportunities are increasingly available for rural youth to take advantage of and to succeed economically in rural areas, perhaps decreasing urban migration and boosting rural economies.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Research Design

The design selected for this project was the One-Shot Case study. As illustrated below, the “X” or variable of interest involves the experiences of individuals as high school agricultural education students and FFA members. Recollections of these experiences were obtained through the use of a mailed survey instrument or an online survey instrument, represented by “O.”

*The One Shot Case Study:*

\[ X \quad O \]

No variables were manipulated because the intent of this study is to gain insight into prior events and experiences, not to affect change or establish causality. Randomization was not used in the selection of subjects or in their assignment to the pilot test group. The survey instrument contains quantitative questions to obtain nominal data in the form of subject demographics, Likert scale questions related to subject’s opinions about influences on their SAEs and current careers, and several open-ended questions providing further descriptive qualitative data related to participants’ careers and entrepreneurial experiences. For these reasons, the Rural Youth Entrepreneur project is best described as a mixed methods non-experimental descriptive study.
Validity and Reliability

Content based validity, also known as face validity, is a description of the appropriateness of an instrument’s content and format for addressing the variable of interest. This type of validity is typically applied to research that does not depend upon the comparison of scores from multiple instruments or the measure of a specific construct to explain research outcomes (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). Content based validity was established early in the development of the survey instrument for this study through the use of focus groups. The focus groups’ recommendations for item improvement or agreement upon the inclusion of certain proposed items were compiled and utilized to draft the pilot version of the instrument for this study.

Internal consistency reliability is a measure designed to estimate how well items that reflect the same construct yield similar results. The results of this reliability measure allow for a general estimate of reliability to be made when a single instrument is administered once to a single group of people (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). For the purposes of establishing reliability of an instrument via pilot testing, Chronbach’s Alpha is a commonly used measure of internal consistency. Chronbach’s Alpha was calculated on the basis of RYEP subjects’ responses to five Likert scale questions measuring the constructs of positive and negative influences on participants’ decision to pursue, or not to pursue an entrepreneurial SAE. After the pilot survey was administered, the option for “neutral” choice was removed from the Likert scale questions, leaving four options measuring the constructs of positive and negative influences. The survey instrument included additional sources of quantitative data that were strictly nominal in nature. This nominal data consisted of demographics provided by participants. For the purposes of data triangulation, the median and range were calculated for this nominal data to provide accurate
context for the generalization of pilot test results. Furthermore, qualitative data were obtained by analyzing subjects’ responses to the open ended question portion of the survey to determine common themes and ideas. Researchers then calculated the frequency of each common theme or idea among all obtained responses to ascertain which were most consistently reported by those surveyed.

**Procedures**

*Population and Sample*

The target population for this study is American Degree recipients from the decade of the 1990s. Study investigators obtained a list of these degree recipients from state FFA offices. State FFA offices maintain recipient records for the various scholarships, awards, and degrees earned by their membership each year. Information in the records for American Degree recipients included: award received, first, last name and middle initial of the degree recipient, FFA chapter membership of the recipient, city in which the recipient lived when awarded, high school attended, and the FFA chapter’s charter number. A total of 190 degree records were received for recipients in the state of Arizona during the 1990s. In addition to award records for the decade of the nineties, the Arizona FFA also provided researchers with these records for all American Degree recipients in 1989 and 2000; the recipients for these two years totaled twenty five individuals.

For the pilot phase of instrument development and testing, researchers chose a purposive sample of nine individuals (n = 9), including six males and three females who received their American Degrees within the ten years preceding and following the 1990s. All of these individuals were contacted and invited to participate in the pilot study through information
obtained by researchers from their FFA advisors, and friends or relatives who were known within the profession of agricultural education. These contacts were made by telephone or email correspondence. The purposive method of sampling was chosen for this pilot test for two reasons: 1) the number of possible subjects (n=25) who met the criteria of having received their American Degree before or after the years that will be targeted in the final phase of this study was very small and 2) the amount of time available for investment in locating and making successful contacts with degree recipients was limited by the timeline established for conducting the research project.

Instrument Development

The original pilot survey was designed by a prior researcher to gather qualitative information regarding the scope of entrepreneurial subject matter taught within the high school agriculture program, through the types of Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) programs conducted by students in rural agriculture programs, as well as through the FFA activities participated in by high school agriculture students. The survey also aimed to explore the perceptions held by American Degree recipients from rural areas regarding the impact that their experiences in agricultural education had on their current occupation(s).

The first phase of the project was completed as a separate research project and involved a thorough review of literature, after which the researchers drafted a set of proposed items consisting of open ended questions for the purpose of establishing content validity. While finalizing the list of proposed items, the research teams in each participating state worked to create a list of experts in the field of agricultural education to serve as focus group panels. Several of these experts were successfully recruited into the study as focus group members.
through email and phone communication. In Arizona, two focus groups were conducted. The first group met at Peoria High School at the end of January 2009 to discuss the proposed survey items. There were five participants in this focus group (3 males, 2 females); it should be mentioned that one of the females in this focus group provided her input via a telephone conversation following the meeting of the other four members due to last minute scheduling conflicts. The second focus group also consisted of five members (3 males, 2 females) and met in early February at Yuma High School to discuss the same set of proposed items; as in the previous focus group, one of the female members provided her input via a telephone conversation shortly after the physical group meeting due to her illness on the day the group convened. In both cases where input was received over the telephone, the research personnel briefed the participant on the recommendations established during the related focus group meeting on an item by item basis. In this way, researchers were able to ascertain whether the absentee focus group members agreed or disagreed with prior recommendations and if they had any additional recommendations for consideration. As a cohort, members of the focus groups conducted in all three states consisted of current and former agricultural education teachers, career and technical education (CTE) program directors, former National FFA Organization members, and members of various agricultural industries from individual communities.

Upon completion of the focus group round, the recommendations received in each state were shared amongst the research teams and used to draft a pilot version of the survey instrument. Among the changes made from the items originally proposed to the focus groups to those included on the draft instrument were:

1) A section of closed-ended questions related to participants’ demographic information including: age, gender, marital status, level of education completed, demographics of the areas a)
in which the participant was raised, b) demographics of the area in which the participant currently resides, and whether or not the participant currently resides in the same area in which they were raised.

2) A series of closed ended questions related to participation in SAE programs (e.g. type of SAE: entrepreneurial vs. placement). Also included were a set of definitions the term SAE and each type of SAE to assure a consistent understanding of question content among those whose related experiences occurred several years prior.

3) A group of closed ended questions related to participation in FFA activities and their influence on individuals’ SAEs.

4) A set of closed ended questions related to agriculture instructor/FFA advisor influence on individual’s SAE.

5) A set of closed ended questions related to participants’ current occupation and involvement in entrepreneurial activities.

6) A series of open ended questions related to the participants’ perceptions of community influences on entrepreneurial ventures, the influence of involvement in entrepreneurial activities on residential preferences, personal entrepreneurial advice to young people, and opinions regarding the effectiveness of/suggestions for improvement of the entrepreneurial curriculum offered in agricultural education programs.

The study was conducted as a mixed methods non-experimental descriptive study. The completed pilot survey was sent to the Human Subjects Review Board at each institution for
approval prior to administration. Upon approval of the survey and study, Phase two of the study commenced.

Phase two of the Rural Youth Entrepreneur Project consists of a re-drafted survey that follows the format of the original instrument but incorporates the recommendations gathered during the focus group meetings as well as edits and suggestions made by a panel of experts. This final survey instrument contains quantitative questions to obtain nominal data in the form of subject demographics, Likert scale questions related to subject’s opinions about influences on their SAEs and current careers, and several open-ended questions, as suggested by advisors and recommended by the focus group (see above), providing further descriptive qualitative data related to participants’ careers and entrepreneurial experiences. Likert scale questions were designed to produce interval-level data with the ‘distance’ between each successive item category being equivalent. For example, in the four point Likert system used during this research project, the implication is that the ‘distance’ between category 1 and 2 is the same as between category 3 and 4. The scoring categories used for Likert data include strong agreement, agreement, disagreement, and strong disagreement, with scores of 1, 2, 3, and 4, respectively. Researcher set a level for the scoring at $\leq 2.00$, with all scores falling at or below 2.00 to be considered impactful and scores above 2.00 to be non-impactful.

The survey was reviewed by a panel of experts in order to assure that the questions were designed to, upon response, scientifically answer the questions they that it was intended to answer. The panel approved the survey instrument. Additional measures were taken through the RYEP research process in order to ensure internal validity as suggested by Fraenkel and Wallen.
Table 1

Techniques Used to Control Threats to Internal Validity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Threat</th>
<th>Standardize Conditions</th>
<th>Obtain More Information on Subjects</th>
<th>Obtain More Information on Details</th>
<th>Choose an Appropriate Design</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Subject
Characteristics | X                      |                                     | X                                 |                              |
| Location        | X                      |                                     | X                                 |                              |
| Instrumentation | X                      |                                     | X                                 |                              |
| Testing         |                         |                                     | X                                 |                              |
| History         |                         | X                                   | X                                 |                              |
| Maturation      |                         | X                                   | X                                 |                              |
| Subject
Attitude    | X                      |                                     | X                                 |                              |
| Regression      |                         | X                                   | X                                 |                              |
| Implementation  | X                      |                                     | X                                 |                              |

In order to pay attention to administrative detail and to achieve a high return rate the re-drafted and completed survey was distributed using the Dillman Total Design Method. The survey was mailed to the updated address list for the American Degree Recipients as mentioned above. The mail out included the survey questionnaire, an introductory letter, a participant disclosure form as required by IRB, and a return self-addressed stamped envelope for responders to return the completed survey to the researcher. It should be noted that a percentage of the mail-outs were returned to sender. Researcher attempted to obtain updated contact information for the returned surveys. In some cases, this was possible, however, some Degree Recipients were unreachable by email, phone, and post mail. Additionally, an identical survey was made available in an online format through www.surveymonkey.com. A link to this survey was included in an email that also contained the same introductory letter and participant disclosure as was included in the hard copy mail out. Results were collected both electronically and through
hard copies received in the mail. After the initial post and electronic mail out, a second electronic notification was sent out in order to remind any Degree Recipients who had not responded that the survey was still available in an electronic format online. The second electronic mail out generated further electronic responses to the survey. All data was collected and examined by researcher. Data from hard copy surveys and electronic surveys were combined into a cohesive electronic format in order to be more easily analyzed and represented. Researcher created graphical representations of the survey responses in order to display the responses in a visual format. Results were also entered into a spreadsheet to be viewed textually. Appropriate questions were cross tabbed, creating a joint distribution between certain variables. The following chapter contains analyses and results of the surveys, both in a textual and descriptive format as well as visually and graphically.

**Response Rate**

A total of 190 degree records were received for American Degree recipients in the state of Arizona during the 1990s. In Phase One of the study, contact information for the American Degree recipients was obtained from FFA files. Of this list of 190 recipients, researchers were unable to reach 112 of the degree recipients, either through phone, email or post mail. Records retrieved from the Arizona FFA contained addresses or phone numbers for the Degree Recipients, many of which no longer belonged to the Degree Recipient. Advisors were also contacted in an attempt to recover updated contact information, however, researchers were only able to attain contact information for 40% of the American Degree Recipients during 1990 to 1999. In some cases, particularly in cases where researcher only had access to a phone number, it was not determined whether contact information was correct or not due to a lack of returned phone calls from some Degree Recipients.
Mail outs were sent to the accessible population of degree recipients (n=78). 78 surveys were mailed through post and/or emailed to Degree Recipients. In addition to the American Degree recipients who were unreachable, a small percentage of surveys were returned to sender as undeliverable and updated contact information could not be attained by researcher. The number of returned to sender surveys was 16.

34 surveys were returned to researcher completed. 34 surveys were considered to be legitimate and useable for this research. With 34 completed and returned surveys out of 62, the response rate was approximately 55% Degree Recipients.

The following data breakdown includes responses and analyses for each section of the survey instrument. The survey instrument contains four specific sections:

A) Demographic Information
B) Supervised Agricultural Experience Project Information
C) Current Occupation Information
D) Open Ended Questions
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSES AND FINDINGS

Research Objectives

In this chapter, the results of the data analysis are presented. The data were collected and then processed in response to the problems posed in chapter one of this dissertation with a focus on research objectives and how the data describe those objectives.

The overall purpose of the Rural Youth Entrepreneur Project was to describe the role of agricultural education as an agent of community development in rural areas and to develop a curricular framework based on this description that will allow agricultural programs to encourage rural economic growth through entrepreneurship. This phase of the study focused specifically on data collection and analyses in order to set the stage for the development of an effective curricular framework. The specific objectives of the Rural Youth Entrepreneur project are to:

- determine whether there is a relationship between youth earning the American FFA degree through entrepreneurial projects and the likelihood of them remaining in or returning to rural communities to participate in entrepreneurial activities as a source of income following high school graduation;
- describe the development of these entrepreneurs through their involvement in agricultural education and the National FFA Organization;
- describe the entrepreneurial topics and activities incorporated into the curriculum utilized by the agricultural educators of these individuals;
- describe the current activities of those American FFA degree recipients who have returned to their rural communities as entrepreneurs.
• develop a curricular framework on which teaching materials for high school agriculture teachers, university faculty, and community educators will be designed for use in increasing and improving entrepreneurial activity in rural communities.

The findings presented in this chapter examine information generated from responses to objectives and demonstrate the potential for the intended curricular framework to be created.

**Research Objective One**

*Part A: Demographic Information*

The target demographic for the research study was a group of FFA American Degree Recipients in the State of Arizona during a ten year period between the years of 1990-1999 (inclusive of the year 1990). Survey responders were made up of 57.1% females and 42.9% males with a mean age of 35 years old. (See Figure 4.1) 92.9% of responders identified themselves as married, while 7.1% described themselves as never married. (See Figures 4.2 and 4.3)

In terms of educational background, 57.1% of responders had achieved a Bachelor's degree at the time of survey response, and 42.9% had achieved a Graduate or professional degree beyond a Bachelor's degree. (See Figure 4.4)
Figure 4.1 Gender breakdown of survey responders
Figure 4.2 Marital status breakdown of survey responders
Figure 4.3 Marital status breakdown of survey responders (2)
Figure 4.4 Educational background of survey responders
The majority, or 52.9%, of responders grew up in a town/small city/suburban area with an estimated population of 2,500 to 49,999 people living in the area. In contrast, 23.5% of responders grew up in a city/urban area with a population of > 50,000 residents. 11.8% of survey responders grew up on a farm/ranch/dairy and 11.8% grew up in a rural/non-farm area with an estimated population of < 2,500. (See Figure 4.5)

Figure 4.5 Demographics of area raised
Responders identified that 61.8% have migrated to a different area from where they were raised. In a later section, responders provide open ended comments in regards to decision to stay versus migrate from the area where they were raised. 38.2% of responders currently reside in the same area in which they were raised. (See Figure 4.6)

Figure 4.6 Migration rate for survey responders
For study purposes, a closer examination was taken of the migration patterns of each category of responders based on where they were raised versus where they currently reside in the form of frequency charting and is identified as Table 2. Each selection of ‘area raised’ was counted and tabulated after being assigned a numerical code for reference. The codes were assigned as listed below:

1. Farm/Ranch/Dairy
2. Rural/Non-farm (population < 2,500)
3. Town/small city/suburban (population 2,500-49,999)
4. City/Urban (population ≥ 50,000)

Table 2

Frequency of Demographics of Area Raised

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n=34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Seventy-seven percent of responders identified that they had grown up in an environment that would be classified as rural. By definition and for purposes of this study, we classify rural as
“all areas outside urban areas with 10,000 or fewer people; this places the upper limit of rural population at ten thousand” (Cromartie, 2007). Because we chose to define ‘rurality’ on the basis of population in a given area for this study, a slight discrepancy does exist between the selected definition of rural and the breakdown of choices provided in the survey instrument, therefore researcher selected a range above the upper limit of rural population limits in order to avoid excessive narrowing of demographic ranges for area raised. Data relating to the first study objective, to determine whether there is a relationship between youth earning the American FFA degree through entrepreneurial projects and the likelihood of them remaining in or returning to rural communities to participate in entrepreneurial activities as a source of income following high school graduation, was further examined by creating breakdowns of groups to view categorically which responders migrated versus which responders remained in or returned to their hometown. Researcher divided up each response category from Table 2 (demographics of where responders were raised coded for ease of data input) and combined that data with the responses generated from the question that asked responders if the area where they currently live is the same area in which they were raised. The resulting data are presented in Figure 4.7.
**Figure 4.7** Migration versus movement data based on area raised vs. area live

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area Raised</th>
<th>Migrated</th>
<th>Remained/Returned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Farm</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Rural</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Town</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Urban</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The data show that in more rural areas, such as categories 1 and 2, responders migrated vs. remained/returned at an equal rate. 50% of responders in each category currently do live in their hometowns, and 50% of responders in each category currently do not live in their hometown. The category that demonstrated the highest migration out pattern is category three. Responders who identified as having grown up in a town/small city/suburban population of 2,500-49,999 citizens migrated out of that area at a rate of 83%. Only 17% of responders in this category currently reside in their hometown. Another interesting discovery is that 100% of responders who were raised in a city/urban area remained in or returned to their home area. There was no migration out of urban areas for responders who were raised in that urban environment.

Research Objective Two

PART B: Supervised Agricultural Experience Project Information

In order to meet the study objectives of providing a description of the development of these entrepreneurs through their involvement in agricultural education and the National FFA Organization and describing the entrepreneurial topics and activities incorporated into the curriculum utilized by the agricultural educators of these individuals, the instrument aimed to attain a more specific understanding of the survey responders’ backgrounds with entrepreneurial endeavors in the FFA. The instrument contained a range of questions that collected specific data on SAE projects and impacts on choices regarding SAEs. Survey responders were provided a set of definitions in order to provide a background for the questions asked of the responders and to facilitate a better understanding of how to identify an appropriate response to the question (see Figure 4.8).
This portion of the survey included Likert scale questions, open ended questions, descriptive and categorical response questions. The first question focused on categorizing the type of SAE in which the responder participated (see Figure 4.8). A large majority (75%) of responders identified that they had participated in an entrepreneurial SAE related to production, followed by placement in production (41.7%) and entrepreneurship and placement in agribusiness (25% each). 8.3% of responders selected an “other” option and provided an open ended response to the question. Responses to this selection identified as placement in agricultural education. Additionally, researcher collected response from an open-ended question asking responders to describe their SAE specifically.
The following definitions from the National FFA Organization may help you to answer the questions below about the projects you had during high school:

**Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) Program:** (formerly known as SOE) Planned practical activities conducted outside of class time that help students develop and apply knowledge and skills. These activities may be either entrepreneurship, placement (paid or unpaid) or research/experimental in nature.

**Placement:** An SAE program where students work for wages or experience.

**Entrepreneurship (Ownership):** The act of organizing, managing and assuming the risk of a business or enterprise.

Figure 4.8 Supervised Agricultural Experience data
To focus on choices within entrepreneurship, researcher divided up responses into two categories and coded each category with a number in order to quantify the specific type of SAE each responder participated in during their FFA career. The specific SAE categories follow below:

1. Animal
2. Plant

Table 3

*Frequency of Category for Entrepreneurial SAE Participation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entrepreneurial Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n=25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is important to note that not all responders participated in an entrepreneurial SAE, therefore the total number of responses to this question does not reflect the entire group of responders. Additionally, some responders who did participate in entrepreneurial SAEs may have elected not to provide an open-ended description of their SAE project. Of those responders who fit the criteria for this data set and who did provide an answer, the data show that choice and/or opportunity within entrepreneurial SAEs among this group of FFA students in Arizona.
leaned towards animal projects with 68% of responders identifying as having completed an animal related entrepreneurial SAE and 32% of responders having completed a plant related SAE.

The next question allowed responders to select a response on a scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The question focused on motivations and impacts for participation in entrepreneurial projects.

In order to obtain a clear breakdown of the data, researcher separated each category on the scale and assigned scores for each indication of extent of agreement. Each choice was given a numerical value, and the total composite score was used to quantify the value or belief in the question. Because the scale contained a range of choices that would indicate values ranging from strong agreement to strong disagreement, values were assigned based on extent of agreement. This is consistent with data collection and analyses for Likert scale questions. Generally, Likert scale data should be collected with as wide a scale as possible. However, it is sometimes appropriate to truncate scales to an even number of categories (typically four) to eliminate the “neutral” option in a forced choice survey scale. This method was applied within this research project as suggested by the panel of experts. Assigned values are listed below:
Table 4

*Likert Scale Response Categories*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The resulting raw, composite data summations are displayed below in Figure 4.9, and actual choices by responders are displayed in Figure 4.10. It should be noted that not all choices were universally applicable to responders, therefore a ‘Not-Applicable’ selection was necessary to maintain validity. Selections made in this agreement extent category are scored as zero and are not entered into statistical calculations, nor do they affect the topic/activities’ final composite score.
Figure 4.9 Composite extent of impact scores for decisions to participate in entrepreneurial SAEs
Figure 4.10 Percentage breakdown of extent of impact choices for decision to participate in entrepreneurial SAEs
Table 5

*Impact on Decision to Complete an Entrepreneurial SAE*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>1.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sx</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\partial)</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>min</td>
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<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>max</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>med</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A  Project was part of an existing family business  
B  Continuation of a 4-H project  
C  Support from family  
D  Support from teacher/advisor  
E  Support from community members  
F  Availability of community resources  
G  Community need for services

The data suggest that support, whether from family members, teachers and/or advisors, or community members was most universally agreed upon as having had the largest impact on responders’ decisions to pursue entrepreneurial projects. Availability of community resources and community need for resources also impacted responders’ choices to participate in entrepreneurship. In examining the relationship of the data to a study objective, the specific impacts that responders agreed most strongly influenced their pursuance of entrepreneurship help to describe the development of these entrepreneurs through their involvement in agricultural education and the National FFA Organization and additionally through the importance that they place on their surroundings and the impact their communities and support systems have had on their success and pursuits as entrepreneurs as well. Categories A and B had notable standard deviation scores for the sample, which can be interpreted as a lack of consistency in the
responses to these categories. While the mean scores for these categories fell just within the level of impact, the responses were quite varied in terms of extent of agreement.

Figure 4.11 shows responses to a contingency question targeting responders who did not participate in an entrepreneurial component as part of their SAE. The question seeks to determine what impacted the responder’s choice to decline an entrepreneurial component of their SAE. This question does not apply to all responders; as mentioned above, the majority of responders identified as having entrepreneurial components in their SAEs for those whose did not, the overwhelming majority answered that most of the impact selections were not applicable to their choice. Impacts that were selected included a lack of facilities and an unawareness of available opportunities. Impacts that the responders disagreed with included a fear of taking risks (see Figure 4.11). For research consistency, a similar approach was applied to the responses from the question relating to Figure 4.11. The same scores were assigned based on extent of agreement for each category. The data generated from this application were somewhat less revelatory (see Figure 4.12), possibly because the majority of responders identified that they had participated in an entrepreneurial SAE and many responders selected “not-applicable” because the question was contingent on non-participation in entrepreneurship. What is observable is that lack of facilities was the only choice considered impactful that was selected, but that a fear of taking risks or an unawareness of available opportunities were not seen as impactful factors in deciding not to complete an entrepreneurial based SAE.

Additionally, a majority (83.3%) of the non-entrepreneurial SAE responders noted that if factors had been different, they would have elected to pursue an entrepreneurial component as part of their SAEs (see Figure 4.13).
Figure 4.11 Percentage breakdown on extent of impact for decisions not to participate in entrepreneurial SAEs
Figure 4.12 Raw composite extent of impact scores for decisions not to participate in entrepreneurial SAEs
Figure 4.13 Choice to consider entrepreneurial SAE under different circumstances
Research Objective Three

Entrepreneurial Topics and Activities Incorporated into Curriculum

The data illustrated in Figure 4.14 asked responders to categorically select from a set of Career Development Events the events they had personally participated in as FFA members. Career Development Events, or CDEs, exist within agricultural education with a goal of helping students to develop the abilities to think critically, communicate clearly, and perform effectively in a competitive job market (FFA, 2013). Currently, there are 24 CDEs within the FFA. To meet study objectives, CDEs were selected that were available at the time of study participants’ active membership within the FFA and that involved either explicit or implicit links to entrepreneurial activities within the program. The breakdown of participation may help to pinpoint which events were not only the most popular but also which may have tied into success within entrepreneurial endeavors when examining further data. Creed Speaking, Extemporaneous Public Speaking, and Farm Business Management were the most identified participatory CDEs. None of the responders identified as having participated in Dairy Foods, Poultry Judging or Horse Judging.
Figure 4.14 Career Development Event categorical participation rate
Figure 4.15 Extent of agreement regarding CDE participation and entrepreneurship
Advisor and Teacher Influence

Over half (58.4%) of responders either strongly agreed or agreed that participation in CDEs influenced their decision to participate in entrepreneurial endeavors (see Figure 4.15). It is clear that CDE participation led to entrepreneurial endeavors within SAEs for a majority of responders as referenced by the data. Another focus involves examining how advisors and/or teachers serve to motivate students towards successful entrepreneurship. Advisors and teachers select and develop curriculum for their programs and also assist students with discerning the type of SAE they will complete. When responders were asked to evaluate whether their advisors and/or teachers influenced their decision to participate in entrepreneurship, 66.7% of responders strongly agreed that their FFA advisor and/or agriculture teacher influenced their decision to participate in entrepreneurial SAEs. 25% of responders agreed with this statement, and 8.3% disagreed with the statement (see Figure 4.16).
Figure 4.16 Extent of agreement for advisor influence and entrepreneurship
Research Objective Four

PART C: Current Occupation

Another objective of the RYEP is to examine the current activities of American Degree Recipients who returned to or remained in rural communities after high school graduation. This objective was explored in the Current Occupation portion of the survey instrument. This portion of the survey contained mostly open ended questions requesting descriptive answers in regards to current occupation and entrepreneurial involvement since FFA. The instrument also contained a quantitative question seeking to quantify what, if any, portion of each responder’s current income is generated through entrepreneurial activities. The question was designed to elicit open ended responses so that responders could further explain or breakdown the percentage if necessary. Additionally, the survey asked responders to select from a scale to what extent different components of agricultural education programs have allowed each to be successful in their current occupations.

Career fields identified by responders included a bio-medical engineer, vice-president of a rural construction company, a Sunday school teacher who oversees 40 volunteers, a bookkeeper for a landscaping company, a stay-at-home mother, an office manager, a farm and ranch manager, a director of development for fundraising endeavors, multiple sales and marketing representatives, a high school science teacher, and several Agricultural Education teachers.

In relation to current occupations of responders, a figure was obtained through the survey for each responder that described what percentage, if any, of their income came from entrepreneurial activities. Figures 4.17 and 4.18 visually display the frequency of these responses
Figure 4.17 shows a broad bin size for frequency of percentage. What researchers saw is that there was essentially no “middle-ground” for the income percentage. Responders were comprised of either entire income entrepreneurs or much smaller scale entrepreneurs who cushion their main income with entrepreneurial generated funds. 30 responders, or 88%, identified that 10% or less of their income is sourced through entrepreneurial activities. Our next indicator on the frequency diagram hits at the maximum percentage level, with four responders, or roughly 12%, describing their income as sourced 99-100% entrepreneurially. Figure 4.18 shows a more defined bin size in order to view the percentage income spread through a specific framework. The bins are segregated into five percentage intervals, with a bin for 0% income as well. The data show that the majority (56%) of responders earn 0% income from entrepreneurial activities. There are, however, earners in the 5-10% range (33%) and as noted above, 12% who source above 95% of income entrepreneurially.
Figure 4.17 Frequency of earning percentage from entrepreneurship
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bin</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4.18 Frequency of earning percentage from entrepreneurship: specific intervals*
Responders were asked to identify specifically what types of entrepreneurial activities they have been involved with since completion of their FFA American Degree. While many responders identified that they have not participated in entrepreneurship since their FFA involvement, other responses generally included consulting work, small business ownership, family business management, wholesale business, and small farming operations. To further categorize and visualize responses, researcher categorically coded each response according to a pre-determined set of categories. Each category was assigned a number (one through five). The numbers do not hold any quantitative value on their own but rather represent each category in a numerical way that can be counted for frequency and analyzed (see Table 6). The coding categories included (with code number following in parenthesis):

- Continuation of a family business (1)
- Start-up business (2)
- Management (3)
- Consulting services (4)
- None (5)
Table 6

*Categorical Frequency of Entrepreneurship Currently in Practice by Responders*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n=34

*note: Responses of ‘N/A’ were recorded as zeros.*
The majority (56%) of responders identified no entrepreneurial activities since FFA involvement, however, 24% of responders stated that they had started their own business in some form and either had or were currently generating income as a result of that entrepreneurship. Business management and continuation of family business were also selected as entrepreneurial activities, and consulting was identified by one responder as a current entrepreneurial endeavor.

**Research Objective Five**

In order to be able to gather the information needed to construct an appropriate curricular framework that will target areas encouraging entrepreneurship, researchers designed a Likert scale question asking responders to describe the entrepreneurial topics and activities incorporated into the curriculum utilized by their agricultural educators and the extent to which those topics have allowed responder to be successful in their current occupations. Figure 4.19 displays the raw response data generated from this question.
Figure 4.19 Extent of agreement for educational components and current success
To quantify the extent of agreement, values were assigned for each level of agreement consistent with prior Likert style scoring. Levels were again set at $\leq 2.00$ for impactful and $> 2.00$ for non-impactful.

*note: Responses of ‘N/A’ were recorded as zeros.

*Figure 4.20* Extent of agreement score for educational components and current success
Table 7

*Categorical Educational Components and Current Success*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>I</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>1.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sx</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \delta )</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>min</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>max</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>med</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A  Record Keeping  
B  Budgeting  
C  Agricultural Sales  
D  Business Planning  
E  Marketing Planning  
F  Public Speaking  
G  Parliamentary Procedure  
H  Officer/Committee Responsibilities  
I  FFA Award Applications  
J  FFA Travel Opportunities

Not all responders participated in all activities or topics presented in the question, therefore a ‘Not-Applicable’ selection was necessary to maintain validity. Selections made in this agreement extent category are scored as zero and are not entered into statistical calculations, nor do they affect the topic/activities’ final composite score.

Figure 4.20 (above) displays the raw, composite scores associated with this question. Table 7 displays the statistical data. Three categories scored below the level of impactful range in terms of association between participation in that topic/activity and success in current occupation. This does not necessarily mean that no responder agreed that the topics/activities
denoted in these categories contributed to current success, as observable in the minimum and maximum raw scores, however, as a whole, the mean score for these categories fell above the threshold for impactful and the sample standard deviation was not high enough to be significant. Record keeping, public speaking, and officer/committee responsibilities achieved mean scores representing the highest extent of agreement with many responders either strongly agreeing or agreeing with the statement that participation in those topics/activities has allowed them to be successful in their current occupations. Additionally, Business Planning had an agreement score with a standard deviation of 0.00, showing no variation from the mean score of 2.00.

**PART D: Descriptive Responses**

The final portion of the RYEP survey includes a series of open ended questions asking responders to describe experiences or provide descriptive responses. Responses were varied and sometimes lengthy, so in some instances, a summary is provided per each question asked of responders.

Question one in this series asked responders to identify and describe any unique characteristics or opportunities within their community that contributed to the success of their entrepreneurial efforts. The question seeks to help determine whether there is a relationship between youth earning the American FFA degree through entrepreneurial projects and the likelihood of them remaining in or returning to rural communities to participate in entrepreneurial activities as a source of income following high school graduation by focusing on each responders perception of the characteristics that encouraged their entrepreneurship within their own unique, rural communities. The thought is that there may be a link between the opportunities and/or characteristics that fostered their entrepreneurial success and future
opportunities for entrepreneurial success based on those same characteristics. If the opportunity is there, will rural youth return and what types of characteristics and opportunities stand out in their minds as impactful?

In order to effectively analyze and quantify the data, researchers compiled the open ended responses and coded each response according to categories consistent with previous survey questions. In part two of the survey instrument, responders gave agreement values to a series of choices regarding motivations for choosing an entrepreneurial SAE. To provide continued consistency within the survey, researcher used those choices to code and analyze data collected in the open-ended question represented above. Some responders chose not to provide an open ended response, noting that the question was ‘not-applicable’ to them personally but declining to provide a reason. The coding categories are as follow:

- Project part of an existing family business (1)
- Continuation of a 4-H project (2)
- Support from family (3)
- Support from teacher/advisor (4)
- Support from community members (5)
- Availability of community resources (6)
- Community need for services (7)

Each category was assigned a number (1 through 7). The numbers do not hold any quantitative value on their own but rather represent each category in a numerical way that can be counted for frequency and analyzed. Certain responses were assigned multiple numbers in instances where the response fit into multiple coding categories (see Table 8).
Table 8

*Categorical Frequency of Community Characteristics Contributing to Entrepreneurial Success*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bin</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n= 24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After coding the responses and examining the frequencies of particular responses, the data seem to show that the success of responders’ entrepreneurial activities is attributed most highly to categories 6 and 5, respectively, which are availability of community resources and support from community members. Additionally, it was noted by some responders that having certain agricultural industries already in place in a community encouraged success.

Another question asked of responders focused on motivators behind responders’ current communities. The survey asked how participation in entrepreneurial activities influenced responders’ decisions to live in the areas in which they currently reside. 33% responders indicated that there was no impact, some noting that they moved where they or their spouse could find work regardless of participation in entrepreneurial activities. Others noted that their
participation had “some” or “a little” effect on their decisions without further explaining the specifics of the effects. A common theme used words such as “values,” “support,” and “contacts made” through entrepreneurial activities to describe influences based on entrepreneurial activities. Many responders seemed to identify with a certain “community” aspect or a “set of values” found in certain areas and the feelings or ideas associated with those areas as important reasons for residence in the area. 17% of responders specifically mentioned financial or business aspects connected to entrepreneurship as reasons for their current choice of community.

Because the RYEP aims to collect data that future researchers and educators may be able to use as building blocks for specific curriculum relating to entrepreneurship in rural areas, the survey was designed to gain feedback from American Degree Recipient responders in a variety of areas that might be useful to researchers and educators. In the open ended response portion of the survey, researchers asked direct questions in regards to curriculum and topics. The first question asked responders to identify what entrepreneurial topics should have been included in the agricultural curriculum (but was not included at the time the student was an agricultural student). Responses included suggestions for curriculum on the dangers of borrowing, the importance of networking, assistance with small business management, financial planning, time management, better record keeping system assistance, budgeting, increased SAE visits, taxes, and more options in the areas of specialty animal and crop production. The responses collected in regards to this question focused heavily on financial areas and indicated that curriculum relating to financial responsibility and success in the small business world would provide a more successful agricultural education curriculum relating to entrepreneurship.

Responders were also asked to identify what areas of the curriculum needed more emphasis or a better explanation in order to help students become successful entrepreneurs.
Categorical coding was also applied to responses generated from this question. To effectively and validly group the data, a generalized sample of agricultural education curriculum based off of current Arizona standards was used to categorize responses. As mentioned in a prior section of this research paper, each category was assigned a number (one through seven). The numbers do not hold any quantitative value on their own but rather represent each category in a numerical way that can be counted for frequency and analyzed. Certain responses were assigned multiple numbers in instances where the response fit into multiple coding categories, Categories included (followed by code number):

- Food Products and Processing Systems (1)
- Plant Systems (2)
- Animal Systems (3)
- Natural Resource Systems (4)
- Power, Structural and Technical Systems (5)
- Agribusiness Systems (6)

Table 9 contains the data associated with this categorical coding. The data generated through this exercise did not prove to be revealing to any objective of the research. Because the categories for curriculum researcher selected were too broad, actual open ended responses are included in a table represented in Table 10.
Table 9

*Frequency of Category for Curriculum Needing More Emphasis or Improvement*

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Subject Area</th>
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The survey provided a field where responders were prompted to open-endedly offer advice for youth regarding involvement in entrepreneurial activities. While not all responders elected to provide advice, responses included:

- “Just do it! Your ability to manage your life and your ability to adapt and provide for your future family hinge on these skills.”

- “Do not spend money you don't have. You can't go broke if you're not in debt.”

- “It is an excellent opportunity to learn what you are capable of doing.”

- “Ask for help and advice and read anything you sign carefully.”

- “Give it a try.”

- “Try something - make sure you have good support from someone with experience - don't bite off more than you can chew.”
• “If you have an interest, then pursue it with all of the means possible to you. There are always people willing to lend a hand when necessary.”

• “Take risks.”

• “Keep strong records and have fun. It is a great way to meet new people and connections for your future. Winning awards is the best part, and strive to do that.

• “It’s a great way to discover interests and learn what skills you have.”

• “Start small and develop a network of support.”

• “Try it, get help and see it through.”
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The objectives of this study involved obtaining data which would allow researchers to describe several characteristics of American Degree Recipients specifically relating to their involvement with entrepreneurship and how it has affected their careers, communities and choices. Specifically, the study sought to determine whether there is a relationship between youth earning the American FFA degree through entrepreneurial projects and the likelihood of them remaining in or returning to rural communities to participate in entrepreneurial activities as a source of income following high school graduation. The study also aimed to describe the current activities of those American FFA degree recipients who have returned to their rural communities as entrepreneurs.

Researchers also collected responses that would help to describe the development of these entrepreneurs through their involvement in agricultural education and the National FFA Organization specifically describing the entrepreneurial topics and activities incorporated into the curriculum utilized by the agricultural educators of these individuals. The overarching goal of this study as a whole was to collect descriptive data in order to better understand how best to create a curricular framework for teaching materials that could be used by high school agriculture teachers, university faculty, and community educators to increase and improve entrepreneurial activity in rural communities.
A survey instrument was designed, reviewed, and redrafted in order to collect the data needed to meet the study objectives. The final survey allowed researcher to conduct a mixed methods, non-experimental descriptive study that was based on responses from American Degree Recipients. The study was limited by the assumed lessening of peoples’ abilities to recall life experiences over time, therefore target population for this project was narrowed to individuals who received their degrees during the decade of the 1990s.

For purposes of this study, assumptions were made that most agricultural education programs in the state of Arizona utilize the total program structure in which students gain entrepreneurial experience through a combination of classroom instruction, SAE, and FFA activities. Researcher also assumed that the American Degree is a strong indicator of successful SAE enterprises among Agricultural Education students and FFA members and that employment opportunities are a major influence on rural youths’ decisions to remain in or leave the rural environment. During the study, “rurality” was described on the basis of population in a given area to create a specific, useable definition.

The instrument was distributed to the population mentioned above through postal mail and electronic mail. Responses to the survey were collected and analyzed, which created graphical representations, data tables, and quantitative figures that were presented in Chapter Four of this research paper.

**Conclusions**

Investigator was able to make several conclusions to objectives based on the data generated from responses to the survey instrument. It was observed that a large majority of rural youth who earned the American Degree through FFA migrated out of town/small city/suburban
areas. In fact, over three-quarters of the youth raised in this area identified that they now live in another location. In open-ended responses to a question of if entrepreneurial participation had any influence on the area where they migrated to, responders identified that they moved to where they or their spouse could find employment or good wages. Additionally, those responders who remained in rural areas noted that they did so because they appreciated the value system that they perceived existed in these areas and support that they receive or because of an existing family business that provided an employment opportunity.

While we observed a trend in responders migrating out of rural areas, youth who were raised in urban environments identified that their entire population have remained in or returned to the urban environments where they were raised. There was no migration out of urban environments. Again, it was described that those areas provide positive employment opportunities for responder and/or spouse. The data reflect movement to where the best employment opportunities exist. However, a percentage of responders are willing to return to or remain in an area because of values and support from the community. The group of responders who are actively participating in entrepreneurship in some form identified that they were working with or managing an existing family business or had started their own small business. In terms of income generated through entrepreneurship, a small population of responders identified that all or nearly all of their income comes from entrepreneurial activities. The majority of responders who report earned income from entrepreneurial activities identify that a percentage of their total income comes from entrepreneurship. This group represents one-third of the entire population of responders.

Data were also collected and analyzed regarding categorical participation in various components of FFA programs, more specifically types of SAEs and CDE participation areas.
Most responders within the population did identify an entrepreneurial component to their SAEs. Because responders are all American Degree recipients, the connection exists that participation in entrepreneurship through SAEs has strong potential to lead to high levels of success in earning and income generation within SAEs. Some responders participated in multiple types of SAEs and had placement components as well as entrepreneurial components. A closer look was taken at the types of entrepreneurial SAEs completed by the responders. Three-quarters of responders provided a description of the specific type of entrepreneurial SAE they completed, and those descriptions were categorized into either an animal based entrepreneurial SAE or a plant based entrepreneurial SAE. It was discovered upon completing this breakdown that the larger majority of responders elected to complete an animal related entrepreneurial SAE while about one-third of the group of responders chose to complete plant related entrepreneurial SAEs. Some responders noted that availability of resources or type of agricultural program direction led them to make the selection that they did. A conclusion was also reached that circumstances affected the SAE choices of this population of youth. Nearly all of the responders who identified that they did not have an entrepreneurial component to their SAE(s) stated that if circumstances had been different, they would have elected to complete an entrepreneurial based SAE. Additionally, a strong conclusion was reached that 91% of total responders agreed on some level, either strongly or generally, that their advisor/teacher influenced their decision to participate in entrepreneurial ventures.

The information contained above is telling in that it describes responders’ participation in entrepreneurship as being strongly influenced by their leadership. Also, most students who did not participate in entrepreneurship would have if certain circumstances had allowed them to do so. When prompted to describe what those circumstances may have been that hindered
participation in entrepreneurial ventures, responders were less decisive when provided an agreement scale for a range of choices related to their decision not to participate in entrepreneurship. However, responders did identify that they agree that a lack of facilities and an unawareness of available opportunities did influence their decision(s) not to participate in entrepreneurial components of SAEs.

On the contrary, a question asking responders to choose extents of agreement based on factors that contributed to their decision to pursue entrepreneurship within SAEs evoked a number of responses. The data from those responses show that this decision was most strongly impacted by support from different categories of individuals, followed by community support and demographics—such as a community need for services and availability of resources. Again, the data describe responders placing strong emphasis on support systems as being influential in their entrepreneurial pursuance and success.

Because the data reflect that a majority of responders did participate successfully in entrepreneurship during their time with FFA, researchers made it an objective to collect data on the specifics of responders participation in different FFA areas. Specifically, the study sought information from responders on Career Development Event (CDE) participation and how participation in various CDE events influenced their decision to participate in entrepreneurship. Participation in every event except for horse judging and poultry judging was evidenced with parliamentary procedure and meats being the most highly selected event for participation. Responders were asked to either strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the statement that participation in CDE events influenced their decision to participate in entrepreneurial activities. The data obtained through this response reflected a fairly divided view. A slight majority of responders identified that they either strongly agreed or agreed with the
conclusion that CDE participation influenced entrepreneurial participation. However, almost half of the responders either disagreed or strongly disagreed with that statement. Based on the data, a conclusion cannot effectively be drawn that as a whole, responders agree that CDE participation definitely influences decisions to participate in entrepreneurship.

Focusing on another total program component, the survey asked responders to select an extent of agreement in regards to which topics/activities of agricultural education programs contributed to success in their current careers. A Likert scale question was designed and responses were analyzed, with scores being assigned to extents of agreement from responders in terms of how each topic/activity has positively influenced their current success. Responders consistently most strongly agreed that record keeping, public speaking, and officer/committee responsibilities have positively impacted their success in their current careers. Most topics/activities reflected some sort of positive score in terms of contribution to current success. However, responders consistently agreed that agricultural sales, marketing planning, and parliamentary procedure have not had any positive impact on the success of their current careers. This is an interesting set of data, considering that the CDE with the highest level of participation among responders was parliamentary procedure. The data should not be interpreted to suggest, however, that the topics/activities which received negative scores are not important to total programs. The data simply suggest that among populations of American Degree recipients who participated in entrepreneurship at a high level, these activities/topics have not positively contributed to their current career success.

Requesting responses on the FFA and entrepreneurial background of responders allowed researchers to generate important study data that may help to build a future curricular framework that further encourages entrepreneurship and development of rural areas. In addition to this
background information, researchers set up a series of open-ended questions asking responders to identify certain factors that could be helpful to current or future agricultural programs relating to entrepreneurship. Responses focused heavily on real-world business and practical financial components, specifically areas such as taxes, loans, financial management, marketing, and selling and buying. Suggestions were also made to expand the scope of available entrepreneurial categories beyond animal and plant selections. Additionally, a responder identified that curriculum on transitioning entrepreneurial activities beyond the FFA level might be helpful.

**Recommendations**

The conclusions of this research suggest several recommendations. The proposal recommended by researcher is to include a separate entrepreneurial curriculum within the classroom component of a total program. The curriculum would be designed as an organized plan that specifies what is to be taught in terms of clear, definable standards of what the student should know and be able to do. The curriculum could be drafted based on information generated through this research study and could also be tied into Supervised Agricultural Experiences. Areas emphasized within the curriculum may include more detailed curriculum on the topics/activities that most impacted success in entrepreneurship as well as current careers of responders to this study. Topics for inclusion may contain an enhanced section on public speaking; a segment with a more in-depth ownership approach to record keeping that includes lessons in financial record keeping and taxes; practical lessons on borrowing, interest and debt; and a piece that involves encouraging students to perform market research within their communities in order to possibly seek out enterable markets. This would include encouraging students to distinguish distinctive community needs for services and focusing on these needs or developing niche markets for entrepreneurship.
It would also be effective to encourage teachers/advisors in their support roles for students. If necessary, an enhanced level of support from community members and family members and those involved with students’ SAEs could be created. This would come from the teacher/advisor/program level and might include an increased number of events and involvement within the individual community, mentorships, and/or possibly a section within the curriculum that brings in speakers from the surrounding community to discuss their experiences and success within that particular community. Many of the responders mentioned the importance of networking and contacts within their entrepreneurial SAEs and their current careers, so components such as those mentioned above could increase success from a multi-fold approach: increasing contact within the community, opening doors to mentorships and support, and expanding knowledge about what each individual community needs and can provide and what businesses may be successful within each community. Recommendations such as these can be expanded upon or individualized to meet each program’s needs.

Implications

The information gained from surveying a sample youth entrepreneurs who have achieved the maximum level of SAE success is important to create a deeper understanding of program strengths and weaknesses in an ever changing social and market atmosphere. Students may be reluctant to directly share their thoughts for program improvement with teachers or advisors, but the information they can provide may help programs evolve into more successful entities. Additionally, the responders in this survey have gone on to achieve success in a variety of career fields, some through entrepreneurship. Their reflections on how experiences within agricultural education, specifically entrepreneurship, have impacted different areas of their lives and professions can offer valuable insight to agriculture teachers who want to positively influence
student success, not just while in the program, but later in life as well. An agriculture teacher/FFA advisor is responsible for incorporating a broad scope of topics into their curriculum, and understanding from a student’s perspective which topics and activities have encouraged long term success can help focus their curriculum.

While improvements and additions can be made to agricultural programs to increase student entrepreneurial success, the challenge really lies in encouraging these entrepreneurs to stay in or return to their rural communities and nurture entrepreneurship within that rural economy. The information provided in this study is also important for rural communities. Our sample of responders indicated that the majority of successful entrepreneurs have migrated out of rural communities in order to secure employment. Urban areas and cities are retaining and welcoming this successful group of youth entrepreneurs at the maximum percentage. It is not ground breaking to state that rural communities must be able to offer attractive employment opportunities to their youth in order to decrease migration from these communities. However, what we see in this study is that support from family members, FFA advisors and/or teachers, and community members had a strong impact on the success of these entrepreneurs. If successful community members are offered increased opportunities to have influence within agricultural education programs and are encouraged to participate more directly with SAEs, perhaps their communities will see higher levels of retention of educated, successful youth. Additionally, entrepreneurs noted that specific community characteristics, such as particular needs for services and availability of resources within the community impacted their decision to pursue entrepreneurship. An agricultural program is more than just the instructor and the students. In order to achieve the highest level of impact and success, community involvement is essential.
When data are presented that suggest high levels of migration out of rural areas based on lack of employment opportunities, programs such as agricultural education are perhaps the vehicles that can provide new ideas to increase incentives for rural youth to remain in or return to their home areas. By developing and integrating new curriculum that intensifies the components which successful entrepreneurial students have identified as helpful and impactful, entrepreneurship among agricultural students may develop and flourish at higher levels in rural areas, spurring economic growth and providing employment opportunities for rural youth who may otherwise migrate away from the area.
REFERENCES

http://www.entre-ed.org/_entre/17-1.pdf


London: Longman.


Dailey, A. (2001), Using Agricultural education as the context to teach life. *Texas A & M University Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communications, 42.*


University of North Carolina. (n.d.), *Iowa Youth and Families Project*. Retrieved from
APPENDIX A: PANEL OF EXPERTS

Panel of Experts

Dr. Edward Franklin: Professor of Agricultural Education. The University of Arizona

Dr. James Knight: Professor of Agricultural Education. The University of Arizona

Mr. Quintin Molina: Associate Professor of Practice. The University of Arizona
APPENDIX B: DEFINITION OF TERMS
**Rural Development:** Activities that contribute to the sustained success and growth of the economy in rural areas through the establishment of entrepreneurial ventures.

**Entrepreneur:** A person who creates and grows an enterprise.

**Agricultural Education:** An agriculture based instructional system that includes three intra-curricular components: 1) classroom instruction, 2) experiential learning through supervised experiences (SAEs), and 3) leadership activities through the National FFA Organization.

**SAE (Supervised Agricultural Experience) Program:** a planned practical agricultural activity which supports skill and competency development, career success and application of specific agricultural and academic skills a student has learned through classroom instruction in agricultural education; SAE was formerly known as SOE, or supervised occupational experience.

**Entrepreneurship:** The act of organizing, managing and assuming the risk of a business or enterprise.

**Placement:** An SAE program where students work for wages or experience.

**Youth Entrepreneurship:** The involvement of a high school aged person in the field of entrepreneurship.

**National FFA Organization:** The national youth organization founded in 1928 for young people interested in the field of agriculture and agriculturally related careers; formerly known as the National Future Farmers of America Organization.

**American FFA Degree:** The highest award that the National FFA Organization can bestow upon its members; this final step in the FFA degree system encourages
students to grow and achieve personally toward establishing themselves in an agricultural career.

**American Farmer Degree:** The original name of the highest degree bestowed upon an FFA member by the National FFA Organization.

**Reliability:** Refers to an instrument’s ability to produce similar results when administered again. In this study it refers to the assessment’s ability to report similar results when administered to several different American Degree recipients from across the state of Arizona.

**Validity:** Refers to an instrument’s ability to measure what it is intended to measure. For this study it refers to the ability of the survey instrument to obtain information about the experiences in agricultural education and the National FFA Organization held by individuals from rural areas throughout Arizona.
The Rural Youth Entrepreneur Project

1. Part A. Demographic Information

Directions: Please fill out the information below as accurately as possible. Please use whole numbers (no decimals or fractions unless otherwise directed). The following questions are necessary only for us to be able to describe the people who responded to our survey. Your response will remain strictly confidential.

1. What is your age in years? 

2. What is your gender?
   - Female
   - Male

3. Which of the following best describes your marital status?
   - Never married
   - Not married but living with significant other
   - Married
   - Separated
   - Divorced
   - Widowed

4. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
   - High School
   - Trade/Vocational Training
   - Associate’s Degree
   - Some College/University Courses
   - Bachelor’s Degree
   - Graduate or Professional Degree beyond a Bachelor’s degree

5. Which of the following best describes the demographics of the area in which you were raised?
The Rural Youth Entrepreneur Project

6. Is the community in which you currently live the same as the one in which you were raised?
   - Yes
   - No

The Rural Youth Entrepreneur Project

2. Part B. Supervised Agriculture Experience Project Information

Directions: Please fill out the information below as accurately as possible. The following definitions from the National FFA Organization may help you to answer the questions below about the projects you had during high school:

- Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) program (Formerly known as SOE) - Planned practical activities conducted outside of class time that help students develop and apply knowledge and skills. These activities may be either entrepreneurship, placement (paid or unpaid) or research/experimentation in nature.
- Placement - An SAE program where students work for wages or experience.
- Entrepreneurship (Ownership) - The act of organizing, managing and assuming the risk of a business or enterprise.

1. Given the definitions above, how would you describe the Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE/SOE) program(s) you had while you were in high school? Please select all that apply.
   - Placement in Production (Farming, Ranching, etc.)
   - Placement in Agribusiness
   - Entrepreneurship in Production (Farming, Ranching, etc.)
   - Entrepreneurship in Agribusiness
   - Other (please specify)

2. Briefly describe your SAE project(s) below. (For placement projects, please describe where you worked, your responsibilities, etc. For entrepreneurial projects, please describe the type of business/enterprise(s) you owned.)
The Rural Youth Entrepreneur Project

3. To what extent do you agree that the following impacted your decision to participate in entrepreneurial projects? (If you did not have entrepreneurial projects, please skip to the next question.)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
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<tr>
<td>Project was part of an existing family business</td>
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<td>Continuation of a 4-H project</td>
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<td>Support from family (parents, siblings, etc.)</td>
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<td>Support from community members</td>
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<td>Community need for services</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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If you selected 'other' please describe here

4. If you did NOT have an entrepreneurial project as part of your SAE, to what extent do you agree that the following had an impact your decision NOT to participate in entrepreneurial projects? (If you did have entrepreneurial projects, please skip to the next question.)

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<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
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<td>Lack of financial resources</td>
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<td>Lack of facilities (land, space, equipment)</td>
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<td>Lack of knowledge</td>
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<td>Lack of skill</td>
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<td>Unaware of opportunities available</td>
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The Rural Youth Entrepreneur Project

5. Would you have considered an entrepreneurial SAE if these factors and circumstances had been different?

☐ ☐ Yes

☐ ☐ No

Please explain why or why not.

6. In which career development events (contests) did you participate as an FFA member? Please select all that apply.

☐ ☐ Floriculture

☐ ☐ Agricultural Mechanics

☐ ☐ Agricultural Sales

☐ ☐ Horse Judging

☐ ☐ Creed Speaking

☐ ☐ Livestock Judging

☐ ☐ Dairy Cattle Judging

☐ ☐ Meats

☐ ☐ Dairy Foods

☐ ☐ Parliamentary Procedure

☐ ☐ Poultry Judging

☐ ☐ Extemporaneous Public Speaking

☐ ☐ Farm Business Management

☐ ☐ Prepared

7. To what extent do you agree that participation in career development events influenced your decision to participate in entrepreneurial ventures?

☐ ☐ Strongly Agree

☐ ☐ Agree

☐ ☐ Disagree
8. To what extent do you agree that your agriculture teacher(s)/FFA advisor(s) influenced your decision to participate in entrepreneurial ventures?

- Strongly Disagree
- Not Applicable
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Agree

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9. What role did your advisor have in your decision to pursue entrepreneurial activities?

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3. Part C. Current Occupation Information

Directions: Please fill out the information below as accurately as possible. Your response will remain strictly confidential.

1. Please describe your current occupation:

2. In what entrepreneurial activities have you been involved since you completed your American FFA Degree requirements?

3. What percentage of your total income is from entrepreneurial activities?

4. To what extent do you agree that the following components taught in agricultural education programs have allowed you to be successful in your current occupation?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Not Applicable
### The Rural Youth Entrepreneur Project

#### 4. Part D. Open Ended Questions

Directions: Please fill out the information below as accurately as possible. Your responses will remain strictly confidential.

1. **What unique opportunities or characteristics within your community contributed to the success of your entrepreneurial efforts?**

   [Text box]

2. **How has participation in entrepreneurial activities influenced your decision to live in the community in which you now reside?**

   [Text box]

3. **What advice do you have for youth regarding involvement in entrepreneurial ventures?**

   [Text box]
4. What entrepreneurial topic(s) should have been included in agricultural education curriculum that was not?

5. What areas of the curriculum needed more emphasis or better explanation in order to help students become successful entrepreneurs?
APPENDIX D: THE RURAL YOUTH ENTREPRENEUR PROJECT SURVEY EMAIL
Greetings,

You are being invited to participate in a study because you are a recipient of the American Farmer Degree, also known as the American FFA Degree. The enclosed survey instrument (hyperlink provided below) is part of a research study. Recipients of the American FFA Degree during the 1990s will be invited to participate in this survey.

The purpose of this project is to explore the relationship between a youth entrepreneur development program – specifically, agricultural education’s Supervised Agricultural Experience program – and rural community development. About 30 minutes will be needed to complete this survey.

The information in the attached letter is provided to help you decide whether or not to take part in the study. Study personnel will be available to answer your questions and provide additional information. You can obtain further information about the research or voice concerns or complaints about the research by calling the Principal Investigator Mattie De Rose Guthrie, Candidate MS, Agricultural Education at (520) 444-9141 or James Knight, PhD. Agricultural Education at (520) 621-1523.

Please find the Participant Disclosure Form Attached with additional project information and IRB approval information.
Thank you for your time.
Best Regards,
Mattie De Rose Guthrie
Dr. James Knight

Link to survey:
http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/RYEP
APPENDIX E: THE RURAL YOUTH ENTREPRENEUR PROJECT PARTICIPANT DISCLOSURE FORM
Project Title: Rural Youth Entrepreneur Project

Investigator: Mattie De Rose

You are being invited to take part in a research study being conducted by The University of Arizona. The purpose of this research study is to research and describe the role of agricultural education as an agent of community development in rural areas. You are being asked to participate in this study because you were an FFA American Degree Recipient during the 1990s.

If you agree to participate, your participation will involve one survey about your experiences and opinions related to your receipt of the FFA American Degree. The survey will take place in a location convenient for you and will last approximately 30 minutes. You may choose not to answer some or all of the questions. During the survey, written notes may be made in order to help the investigator review what is said. Your name will not appear on these notes.

Any questions you have will be answered and you may withdraw from the study at any time. There are no known risks from your participation and no direct benefit from your participation is expected. There is no cost to you except for your time and you will not be paid for being in this study.

Information about you will be stored in a locked file cabinet and/or computer files protected with a password.

Information about you will be kept confidential to the extent permitted or required by law. People who have access to your information include the Principal Investigator and research study personnel. Representatives of regulatory agencies such as the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) and entities such as the University of Arizona Human Subjects Protection Program may access your records to make sure the study is being run correctly and that information is collected properly. The institution where study procedures are being performed (The University of Arizona Department of Agricultural Education) may also see your information. However, any information that is sent to them will be coded with a number so that they cannot tell who you are. Representatives from these entities can see information that has your name on it if they come to the study site to view records. If there are any reports about this study, your name will not be in them.

You can call the Principal Investigator to tell him/her about a concern or complaint about this research study, The Principal Investigator, Mattie De Rose, MS Agricultural Education, can be called at (520) 444-9141. You may also contact the Principal Investigator’s advisor, Dr. James Knight, PhD Agricultural Education at (520) 621-1523.

For questions about your rights as a research subject; or if you have questions, complaints, or concerns about the research and cannot reach the Principal Investigator or want to talk to someone other than the Investigator, you may call the University of Arizona Human Subjects Office.

Version: 07/25/10
Protection Program office.
- Local phone number: (520) 626-6721
- Website (this can be anonymous): http://ocr.vpr.arizona.edu/irb/contact.

By participating in the interview(s) or survey(s), you are giving permission for the investigator to use your information for research purposes.

Thank you.

________________________________________________________________________

Investigator's Name

Version: 07/25/10
APPENDIX F: IRB HUMAN SUBJECTS APPROVAL FORM
HSPP Correspondence Form

Date: 07/27/10
Investigator: Mattie De Rose, Graduate Student  
Department: Agricultural Education
Advisor: James Knight, Ph.D.
Project No./Title: 10-0281-00 Rural Youth Entrepreneur Project
Current Period of Approval: 07/27/10 – no expiration

IRB Committee Information

Administrative Action  
Administrative Review – Exempt review
FWA Number: FWA00004218
Documents Reviewed Concurrently
Project Approval Form – Social/Behavioral (received 07/25/10) 
Consenting Instruments:
Disclosure Form (version 07/25/10)
Recruitment Materials: Letter to Participants
Protocol
Data Collection Instruments: Rural Youth Entrepreneur Education Survey for American FFA Degree Recipients
Status
Approved
Approved
Approved
Approved

Determination
Approved as submitted effective 07/27/10

Regulatory Determination(s)
Exempt Approval 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2)

Elizabeth A. Boyd  07/27/10  
Assistant Vice-President, Research Compliance & Policy
Office for the Responsible Conduct of Research
EAB:dg

Reminder: Continuing Review materials should be submitted 30-45 days prior to the expiration date to obtain project re-approval.

- Projects may be concluded or withdrawn at any time using the forms available at http://orev.yparizona.edu/irb.
- No changes to a project may be made prior to IRB approval except to eliminate apparent immediate hazard to subjects.
- Original signed consent forms must be stored in the designated departmental location determined by the Department Head.

Arizona’s First University – Since 1885
Form version: 06/18/10